(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "China is Japan's major worry" appearing in 'Pioneer' dated July 20, 1996;

(b) if so, whether it is a fact that there has been manifold increase in China's power;

(c) if not, the information available with the Government in this respect;

(d) whether it is also a fact that this increase in defence power is likely to destablise the security balance of this continent; and

(e) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI I.K. GUJRAL): (a) Yes, Sir. Government have seen the news report.

(b) to (e). According to official Chinese statistics, quoted in the White Paper on National Defence Policy, Arms Control, Disarmament and Security, released on November 16, 1995, China's defence expenditure in 1994 was US $ 6.6 billion. According to official statistics China's expenditure on national defence has grown at an annual rate of 6.22% in the period 1979-94. China's defence expenditure in 1995 was US $ 7.5 billion. Estimates made by non-Chinese sources place China's defence expenditure at a higher level.

Government are also aware that China has continued to modernise and upgrade its defence forces and has, inter alia, inducted sophisticated hardware from abroad.

Government keep a constant watch on developments which have a bearing on India's security and is taking all appropriate steps to safeguard the security of the country.

[English]

Flyovers on Railway Crossings

3747. SHRI B.L. SHARMA 'PREM': Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Railway crossings all along the National Highways;

(b) the number of railway crossings which are having flyovers out of them; and

(c) the plan of the Government for construction of flyovers over the remaining crossings?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (c). Information is being collected and shall be laid on the Table of the House.

Evaluation of Papers of CBSE Examinations

3748. KUMARI FRIDA TOPNO: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "CBSE checking wide off the mark" appearing in the Indian Express dated August 1, 1996;

(b) if so, facts thereof and reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed by the Government to prevent the recurrence of such happenings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MUHI RAM SAIKIA): (a) to (c). Attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned 'CBSE checking wide off the mark' that appeared in the Indian Express dated 1st August, 1996.

As regards factual information about various points raised in the news-item, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has informed that the answer scripts of class X students evaluated at the Kendriya Vidyalaya, S.P. Marg, New Delhi, in the subject of Hindi in the Examination conducted by the Board in 1996 were evaluated by the teachers qualified in Hindi as reported by the Principal of the concerned school.

After the declaration of results of class X and class XII Examinations certain requests are received for re-checking/ verification of marks every year. In 1996 also, similar requests were received and the same were processed as per norms laid down in the Examination Bye-laws of the Board and the results of re-checking/verification of marks were communicated at the earliest to the concerned candidates. There is no provision for the re-evaluation of answer scripts in the Examination Bye-laws of the Board.

As regards the subject of Business Studies in class XII, the overall pass percentage was 92.8% in 1996 as compared to pass percentage of 91.6%, 92.7% and 92.8% in 1993, 1994 and 1995 respectively. In order to ensure proper evaluation of answer scripts the Board follows a very elaborate system of evaluation and detailed instructions in this regard have been laid down in its Examination Bye-laws. The Board has informed that the examiners normally evaluate 20 answer scripts a day which is within the limit prescribed by the Board in its guidelines after careful consideration.

[Translation]

National Award to Teachers

+3749. SHRI LALIT ORAON: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Primary and Higher Secondary School teachers in Bihar awarded National Award every year by the President;